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## ECA Update: September 7, 2016

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 2016 National Cleanup Workshop



Visit [cleanupworkshop.com](http://cleanupworkshop.com)

September 2016

14

House Nuclear  
Cleanup Caucus Event  
in Washington, DC

September 4, 2016



In the early evening of Dec. 23, 2015, computer hackers launched three attacks — 30 minutes apart — on power companies in the Ukraine. As helpless power officials watched, unknown assailants seized control of their systems

and shut down power to roughly 230,000 customers, leaving them in the cold and dark.

Power was restored to most customers within six hours, but experts say the next attack, wherever it comes, could be far worse. While the incident in Ukraine served as a wakeup call to many, for those at Idaho National Laboratory who have long been working to protect the American power grid and make it more resilient to attack, what took place last December only confirmed what they already knew: It can happen here.

“INL is known internationally for its expertise in securing critical infrastructure from cyber threats,” said Brent Stacey, INL’s associate laboratory director for national and homeland security. “Our nation faces an urgent challenge because a disruption of our power grid would have a dramatic impact on society.”

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## Ohio Washington delegation touts Piketon

*Portsmouth Daily Times*

September 2, 2016

September 2016

15

DOE-NE Consent-based Siting Summary of Public Input Meeting in Washington, DC

November 2016

16-18

INVITATION ONLY  
2016  
Intergovernmental Meeting with DOE in New Orleans, LA

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Two U.S. Senators from Ohio have again asked for money for the Piketon cleanup. On Thursday, U.S. Sens. Rob Portman (R-OH) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) asked Senate appropriators to include funding to maintain ongoing

cleanup efforts at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon in any short-term continuing resolution considered in the Senate. While the fiscal year 2017 Energy and Water Appropriations bill passed in the Senate earlier this year included funding for decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) efforts at the site, the bill has not cleared the House of Representatives – leaving funding for the plant in question. Continued funding for the plant is critical to ongoing cleanup and preventing layoffs.

In a letter sent to leaders of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, the Senators talked about the importance of the projects at Piketon.

“Portsmouth’s D&D efforts are an integral part of the Department of Energy’s commitment to the people of southern Ohio,” said Portman and Brown in a letter sent to leaders of the Senate Appropriations Committee. “Continued operations at the present level is an essential part of that commitment.”

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## State looks to dismiss lawsuit over federal nuclear lab cleanup

*Associated Press*

September 1, 2016





SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — The New Mexico Environment Department is asking a federal court to dismiss a watchdog group's lawsuit over a cleanup effort at one of the nation's premier nuclear weapons factories.

Nuclear Watch New Mexico filed its lawsuit in federal court in May, naming the U.S. Energy Department and Los Alamos National Security LLC as defendants.

The lawsuit lists a dozen violations. It says the defendants are liable for hundreds of thousands of dollars in civil penalties for failing to comply with a 2005 cleanup agreement with state officials.

The agreement, which ended a court fight between New Mexico and DOE, was supposed to have required cleanup of the lab's entire 40-square-mile site by last year but that work was not completed as the lab failed to receive federal appropriations.

In a motion filed Thursday, the Environment Department argues that a new agreement made in 2016 invalidates the 2005 agreement the lawsuit is based on and therefore the lawsuit should be dismissed. "Because the 2005 Consent Order has been superseded by the 2016 Consent Order, the 2005 Consent Order is void and is no longer in effect," the motion says.

The new agreement does not have a specific timeline for the cleanup of tons of radioactive waste still marooned at the lab. That waste is contained in rows of stacked drums inside temporary tents outfitted with monitoring equipment and fire suppression systems.

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## LANL's long environmental cleanup

KUNM

September 6, 2016



Los Alamos National Laboratory has been one of the country's foremost nuclear research centers ever since the atomic bomb was developed there in the 1940s. Weapons and engineering programs continue there today, but the U.S.

Department of Energy is still cleaning up contamination left over from World War II.

When the U.S. government was running the atomic bomb program at Los Alamos, they generated a lot of dangerous waste—things like plutonium, mercury and chromium, which in many cases, they just piped off the edge of nearby canyons. Now the lab has moved outside of town, but much of the pollution remains.

“We would have expected what came out of this pipe was liquid waste. And in this case we're sure it had plutonium in it,” said Todd Haagenstad, who directs soil cleanup projects in Los Alamos. He pointed to a bare patch of ground marked with red flags where a disposal pipe used to be. “And so that waste would come out and it would come down that pipe, and it would come out onto the side of the canyon here.”

Throughout the summer, a team of specially trained workers has been excavating the plutonium-laden dirt one bulldozer load at a time. It's a tightly-enforced process all taking place on rugged canyon edges, where a misplaced footstep can send you tumbling. First each load of dirt gets put into a large bag. Then a radiation specialist tests the workers and the bag of dirt for radioactivity levels. Once the supervisor gives the go-ahead, the bag is loaded onto an 18-wheeler bound for a disposal site in Utah.

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## Accident halts shipments at UMTRA site

## **Moab Sun News**

September 1, 2016



Cleanup work at the Moab Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Project site ground to a halt this week, following a truck accident that left the driver with significant knee injuries.

The unidentified contractor from Grand Junction, Colorado, was bound for the project's rail-loading facility above Potash Road with a sealed container full of uranium mill tailings at about 1:50 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 29. As his truck rounded a corner, it tipped on its side, and the container opened, spilling an estimated one-third to one-half of its contents into a nearby ditch, according to Grand County UMTRA Liaison Lee Shenton.

The driver, who reportedly sustained minor bumps to his head, was transported to Moab Regional Hospital's emergency room for treatment of his injuries; he was released later that day. Others who are responsible for handling the containers at the project site about 4 road miles north of downtown Moab were reportedly sent home until the morning of Tuesday, Aug. 6.

"Basically, the project is on hold until they get that truck hauled away and clean up that spot," Shenton said.

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## **Our Voice: Washington Closure a Hanford success**

**Tri-City Heraldrticle Source**

September 4, 2016



On time and under budget.

Let's face it, those are not words typically associated with cleanup work at Hanford.

But Washington Closure Hanford has managed to accomplish the extraordinary: It met its deadline and saved money in the process.

By the end of this month, Washington Closure's role in removing deadly contaminants from the Columbia River Corridor will be considered complete, and company officials say they achieved their goal of \$320 million below estimated costs. That savings freed up money that then was used for additional cleanup projects.

This is exactly the kind of success story Hanford and the community needs.

The significance of this achievement is two-fold. The Columbia River is officially now more protected than ever before from the deadly waste left over from plutonium production during World War II, and this triumph sends a message that cleanup money for Hanford was well spent.

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## Energy Department ends inquiry into Idaho radiation exposure

*Yakima Herald*

September 1, 2016



BOISE, Idaho (AP) — The U.S. Department of Energy says it's concerned about a radiation leak two years ago at an eastern Idaho nuclear facility that contaminated nine workers, but the agency says it will not begin a formal investigation.

The federal agency's Office of Enforcement in a letter dated Wednesday told Battelle Energy Alliance, a research contractor, that it would continue to monitor the company's efforts to improve nuclear safety at the Idaho National Laboratory but no additional requirements were being imposed.

"The actual nuclear safety consequences of this event were low, but DOE views seriously any event in which workers receive unplanned radiological uptakes," the letter states.

Officials say the low-level exposure of the nine workers in late August 2014 occurred after faulty air monitors failed to detect a release of radioactive material from a sealed compartment.

Battelle in a statement said it has taken corrective actions to address the federal agency's concerns at the Idaho National Laboratory. "The safety of our workforce and the public is INL's top priority," spokeswoman Misty Benjamin said.

The exposure took place at the lab's high-security Materials and Fuel Complex west of Idaho Falls at levels well below annual regulatory limits, according to a report prepared for the Energy Department and released in March.

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